

The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review

November 1943

Turning the Clock Back on Reform Judaism

By DR. ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL

Saul Tchernichovski—Rebel Poet

By JACOB S. MINKIN

The Drama of the Conference

By LOUIS LIPSKY

Germany's Tragic Jew

By ALFRED WERNER

The Remarkable History of the French Jews—PART II

By MABEL LYON

News of the Month

CENTER BULLETIN BOARD

OPENING FORUM LECTURE OF THE SEASON

Monday Evening, December 6, 1943

QUENTIN REYNOLDS

Ace War Correspondent; Author of "London Diary," "The Wounded Don't Cry," "Only Stars Are Neutral," etc. He has just returned from a trip that took him to the Russian, North African and Italian fronts.

Subject:

"Front Line News Experiences in Russia and Italy"

December 13th

HARRY HERSHFIELD

Columnist, Radio Commentator, Cartoonist and Humorist

Subject:

"Humor and Reactions in General"

December 20th

WALDO FRANK

Novelist, Essayist, Critic, Historian, Lecturer; Authority on South America

Subject:

"Why We Must Know Other Americas"

Monday Evening, December 27th

Symposium on
"Racial Prejudice"

MAURICE SAMUEL

Brilliant Author, Lecturer, Translator and Zionist Leader; Author of "You Gentiles," "The Great Hatred," "The World of Sholom Aleichem," etc.

and

DR. A. CLAYTON POWELL, Jr.

Councilman of the City of New York, Pastor of the Abyssinian Church, Editor and Co-Publisher of "People's Committee."

ADMISSION to Reynolds Lecture: Center members, free; non-members, 55¢ incl. tax. Hershfield Lecture: 30¢ to Center members and 55¢ to non-members, incl. tax. The remaining lectures will be free to members. A charge of 30¢ (incl. tax) will be made to non-members.

ANNUAL HEALTH LECTURES "WAR-TIME AND POST-WAR HEALTH"

Final Lecture

Monday Evening, November 29th

DR. MILTON SENN

Associate Professor of Pediatrics in Psychiatry at the Cornell University Medical College and Associate Attending Pediatrician to the New York Hospital.

Subject:

"The Needs of Children in War-Time and in Peace"

A WORTHWHILE CHANUKAH GIFT

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BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER REVIEW

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No. 12

TURNING THE CLOCK BACK ON REFORM JUDAISM

THE various Jewish news agencies have recently reported at great length a most interesting phenomenon in Jewish religious life in America. A Reform Temple in one of the cities in Texas is taking the lead in a counter-revolution in the Reform movement. It appears that the leaders of this Temple are very much concerned about the trend, both in the Reform Rabbinate and in the laity, towards a return to Jewish values, to Jewish ritual and ceremonial, to the Hebrew language and to a love for Palestine. And they are up in arms against what they term a betrayal of Reform Judaism.

This Texas congregation has passed a number of resolutions in which they give vehement expression to their "Jewish" views. They protest against the Central Conference of American Rabbis — the national organization of Reform Rabbis in America — because these Rabbis are becoming more interested in Palestine, because they took part with their fellow-Jews in the American Jewish Conference, because in their new revised prayer book and hymnal they included the *Hatikvah*, and because they frequently plead for a return to Jewish ceremonial.

They protest, also, against the Union of American Hebrew Congregations — the national lay organization of Reform Jewry — for permitting themselves to be influenced in their religious thinking and Jewish action by these misguided Rabbis, for preferring the term "liberal" instead of the term "Reform," for joining with their Rabbis in taking part in the American Jewish Conference, and for having accepted in large measure the philosophy of Zionism. They protest, in emphatic fashion, that the Jews are not a race, not a nationality, not a people, but only a religious community.

And they protest, too, against the He-

brew Union College in Cincinnati, the training college for the Reform Rabbinate, because this institution teaches too much Hebrew — an unnecessary waste of time — and because it admits as students young men who come from orthodox and conservative Jewish homes, thus polluting, as it were, the religious atmosphere in the Reform Temples.

To be thoroughly consistent with their protest, they have passed a resolution making it a rule that no one can become a member of their Temple unless he signs a pledge accepting their interpretation of American Reform Judaism and unless he agrees that he will not, *chas v'sholom*, become contaminated by the views of those who preach a new kind of Reform — a love for the old values in Jewish life. To protect themselves further, applicants for Temple membership must state what their religious affiliations have been for the last five years, and whether they have had any connection with orthodox or conservative religious groups. These Texas people mean business. They are not going to take a chance in admitting as a member a Jew who might influence them to become more Jewish in their religious thought or practice. They should really — and perhaps they will — organize a sort of Gestapo to watch their members lest they be discovered including a Hebrew word in their prayers or observing an old Hebraic ritual.

By a peculiar ironic fate, the new Rabbi whom they recently elected happens to come from an old-fashioned orthodox Russian home, his father having been a *chazan* in an orthodox *shule*. How these Reformers will react when they learn this horrible truth, Heaven alone knows.

It is hardly necessary to comment on this phenomenon. If it were not that we are living in such critical days such an

incident might arouse a hearty laugh among all of us. As it is, it is a tragic comedy. Here is a group of Jews who have not learned anything in the last few decades. They are still living in Germany in those days of childish naïveté of almost a century ago, when Reform was founded. They forget, however, that the very basis of Reform was continuous growth and development. Because that growth and development are leading the thinking element in Reform back to the classic Jewish ideals, these "stand-patters" want to turn the clock back to the days when Reform was born, disregarding all the errors and mistakes which the leaders of Reform today recognize and want to remedy.

It would require the service of a noted psychiatrist to study the minds of these Jews, to learn the reason for an inferiority complex which gives them that constant dread of being themselves, to learn the cause for their self-hate, which makes them see only ugliness in all those things in which people of other nationalities see only beauty. They want to break away from the Jewish people. As far as we are concerned, we can and would gladly let them go. They are no asset to our faith or to us. But the world will not let them break away. Despite all their protestations, the world insists on regarding them as Jews. That is the greatest tragedy. *Al korchoch ato chai*, "You are compelled to remain as Jews!"

Pierre Van Paassen, in his new book, "The Forgotten Ally," calls these Jews "Circumcized Unitarians." It is an excellent designation. Certain it is, they are not real Jews.

— ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL

Our Own Isolationists

THE American Jewish Committee, which appeared willing to subscribe to the principle of democratic or-

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ganization in Jewish life by forming part of the American Jewish Conference, has withdrawn from that body. This action was decided through its Executive Committee and not by its membership.

The action of the Committee has had wide repercussions unfavorable to it. Important national organizations as well as noted Jewish leaders have vigorously denounced the Committee, and some organizations have withdrawn from it. Among the condemnations a statement published in *The New Palestine*, organ of the Zionist Organization of America, well expresses the feelings of the great majority of Jews. One sharp paragraph observes:

"Unperturbed by the intra-national bickering which so unfortunately disrupted the French leadership outside of France, and the same kind of quarreling which threatens to turn Yugoslavia into a battlefield between the two factions, the gentlemen of the American Jewish Committee seem to be of the opinion that unity is a luxury which the Jews can ill afford to enjoy. Every important group and element in American Jewish life is affiliated with the American Jewish Conference, but the Committee has chosen to isolate itself from the community. Theirs is a self-imposed *cherem*, and surely they have, by their action, earned the right to the epithet 'isolationist' in the widest sense of the term."

There can be no doubt, however, that eventually an enlightened public opinion will make the Committee realize the enormity of its offense and lead it to a recantation of its action. — L. J. G.

Religious Cooperation for World Peace

A SIGNIFICANT and progressive pronouncement of fundamental principles to govern the reconstruction of the world after the war has been jointly issued by the three major faiths. The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, the Catholic Church, and the Synagogue Council of America have, in unison, presented a platform which declares in substance that the postwar provisions for peace and justice shall declare the supremacy of the moral law for world society, assure the rights of all individuals, protect the

"JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES"

"בינינו לבין עצמינו"

An Intimate Chat Between Rabbi and Reader

I WANT to continue what I began in my last month's column, to convey to the readers of the *Review* some of the sentiments expressed by our members and sons of members serving in the armed forces through their letters to me during the past Holiday season. As I have already noted, all of them recognize the strong tie which binds them to our Center. Pvt. Louis Seeger, from Camp Shelby, Miss., emphasized this thought when he wrote:

"I was more than pleased to receive your letter of New Year's greeting and good wishes on my first Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur away from home. That note carried more cheer than you can imagine, if only for the reminiscences it stirred up . . . As far back as I can remember, the Center has held together the only community I knew — the Center and you. And it made me feel warm inside to think how much your little message must have meant to the boys — less fortunate than I — who are scattered around the world, in Italy, in Africa, the Pacific, and God knows where. They were still held together by the Center they grew up in."

Pvt. Melvin D. Leff, from Kessler Field, Miss., wrote in the same vein. After telling us of the preparations that the Camp was making for the Holiday services he added: "However, there is no substitute for the Brooklyn Jewish Center, and when you are away from it you

realize it all the more."

Seymour Mines, in the U. S. Air Force, in Baer Field, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, told us what, I am sure, is in the hearts of all our men in the service. "With the approach of the High Holy Days," he wrote, "the distance to home becomes more accentuated. Your letter, however, reminds me that no matter how far it is, in spirit it is near by. To me the holidays will always symbolize closeness to family, friends and race. To the world I think it will serve as a symbol of freedom for all peoples, for all times. They who will destroy that freedom must inevitably meet with destruction. I am proud to be a part of the forces aiming to achieve this end. I am especially proud to be a member of that people who symbolize the objectives of the war."

Nearly everyone wrote in gratitude of the hospitality accorded to them by the Jewish communities in their localities, and also paid high tributes to the work of the Jewish Welfare Board in their behalf. Cpl. Sol Sorcher, from Desert Training Center in California, told us: "The Jews in Los Angeles treated the Jewish soldiers to such fine hospitality on Rosh Hashonah that it will take a long time for us to forget their kindness. It was such a grand feeling to eat several Jewish meals and to sleep in a civilian home. By the way, the Fairfax Jewish Community Center made all the arrangements for us."

[Continued on page 20]

rights of weak, oppressed, and colonial peoples and also of minorities, organize international machinery with adequate sanctions to maintain peace, develop international economic co-operation, and assure a just social order within each country.

It is, of course, not novel for the leaders of these three religious groups to assert lofty, ethical principles in behalf of the afflicted and the weak as well as in furtherance of a wholesome social system. It is, however, of considerable importance that these great bodies have determined on a course of co-operation in

the promulgation of fundamental social objectives.

Many details will certainly have to be incorporated in the proposals now made. Vast implementing will be necessary. The beginning, however, is most hopeful and helpful.

With continued joint action by these religious bodies, the world must find itself considerably aided in its efforts to reach a just and enduring solution of its problems. Spiritual devotion will be deepened to the extent that such action is perpetuated and strengthened.

— L. L.

SAUL TCHERNICHOVSKI—REBEL POET

By JACOB S. MINKIN

SSAUL TCHERNICHOVSKI, the Hebrew poet who died recently in Palestine at the age of sixty-eight, was a striking and, in many respects, a unique figure in modern Hebrew literature. While in popularity he did not compare with Bialik, his admirers, notably Klausner, gave him an even higher rank — that of the most gifted and original poetic genius to have arisen in Israel since the poets of the Bible. If any kinship to him is to be established, one is to look for it not in Hebrew alone, but in general literature, in poets like Shelley, Byron, Heine and Pushkin.

Saul Tchernichovski was a poet who wrote in Hebrew; to him the ancient language disclosed its most alluring charms, although he might have been much more at home in any of the half-dozen European languages which he mastered. His language was the language of the Bible, but his inspiration came from other sources. Although he wrote with the fervor and conviction of a Jew, his appeal was to a much wider audience. His muse was not of Zion but of Parnassus; his idioms were the idioms of Sinai, but his vision came from other directions. He was steeped in the classical tradition of Greece rather than in the poetry of Gabirol, Halevi and their more recent successors. Like Goethe, whom he in many respects resembled, he might have been styled — as in truth he was — "The Great Pagan" because of his coquetry with heathen gods. Although there is no lack of recognition in his poetry of the exalted ethical outlook of the ancient Hebrew Prophets, he was not insensitive to the lure of the "False Prophets."

He lived almost alone among his Hebrew brother poets, for his message was incredibly strange and foreign. It was as if he came from another region, as if he

spoke a language not comprehensible to his blood-brothers. Time and again he wondered whether he had not come too soon and whether his labor was not in vain. While the Jewish poets of his generation spoke of *Galut* and the ghetto and wedded their lyre to the death-pains of their stricken and martyred people, his muse dwelt voluptuously on fields of rippling grain, on staring sunflowers and gleaming landscapes. There was not in him the ghetto *schmerz*; it seemed as if he did not feel its bitterness. The world had no darkness for him, no pangs of suffering, no regret, no remorse, no grief, no sorrow, no disappointment. He was the poet of the undefeated, unvanquished, unbeaten. His sky was always blue, his earth always green, his life always gay. He saw everywhere roses, roses, roses . . .

The God of his fathers is a stern God, dealing out punishment and inflicting pain upon the unrighteous. He is also a jealous God who brooks no rivalry, no competition, no partnership in his lonely abode. Tchernichovski's god is a gay and jolly deity, a god of life and love and song, as comely as spring, as fragrant as flowers, who neither wearies nor moans, nor scolds, nor lays shackles about the soul. It is thus that the youthful poet, despairing of finding light and happiness in the God of his fathers, treads his way to Olympus and composes songs to Apollo.

There is a wide chasm between the outlook of Tchernichovski and that of his people. Many pages of their history are taken up with their struggle against strange gods and alien worship. That struggle became particularly keen when Greece appeared on the scene. But the secular-minded poet chose Olympus rather than Sinai, Zeus and Apollo rather than Jehovah. He even sang songs to Bel and Astarte, the very heathen deities the Jewish Bible so vehemently denounced. In a poem of extraordinary power and insight, "The Death of Tammuz," the poet pays glowing tribute to the Babylonian goddess of vegetation, in contrast to Ezekiel, who, in disgust, brands the Tammuz cult an "abomination." With an irrepressibly light and joyous heart he calls for mystic dances in the woods, in the dales, in the groves, beckoning, like the old pagans, to Tammuz, the bright,

the living, the wonderful, to come back. For with her death, joy and freedom — the whole pagan world of wonder — had passed out, and the days to come would be "days of cloud, eclipse of the soul, and autumn without end."

By universal opinion, the Torah is the rock on which Judaism is founded; but Tchernichovski pays it scant respect. To him, it seems, its commands and precepts chained and fettered the Jew and drained him of what strength and lust of living there was in him. There were rebels against Judaism and the Torah before — Elisha ben Abuyah among the ancients and da Costa, Spinoza, and Heine among the moderns, to mention but a few. In a former generation, J. L. Gordon expressed himself strongly against the glorification of the primacy of the spirit. But none of them was as bold and audacious as Tchernichovski. They merely scratched the surface, while he shook the whole edifice. He called for a reconsideration of the traditional Jewish values, for a complete change of regimen in Jewish life. He did not hate Judaism, but wanted it altered, modified, adjusted to the world in which the Jew and Judaism live. A new message was to be spoken to a people immersed in old and outlived traditions, and Tchernichovski proclaimed it. His cry seems to be, "Away from the Wailing Wall with its gloomy past to a future that is bright with God's original gifts of life and beauty and power." His own generation appreciated but poorly the gift the poet had brought it, and dismissed him with such names as Helene, pagan, foreign plant, pre-Torah Jew, and the like. But in the meantime, new life, a new race of Jews, sprang up in Palestine, men strong and confident, worthy of their great past, who look to Tchernichovski as their spiritual godfather and bless the name so long derided and misunderstood.

Tchernichovski never reached the stature of Bialik as a Jewish national poet. The *metier* of one was not the rule of the other. They lived in two different milieus. They can no more be compared than can be compared Rabbi Akiba and Bar Cochba, Ahad Haam and Berdichevski. What one affirmed the other denied,

Saul Tchernichovski died from a heart attack at Katamon, a suburb of Jerusalem, where he went to spend Succoth. In accordance with his will, he was buried in the Old Cemetery in Tel Aviv by the side of that other great Hebrew poet, Chaim Nachman Bialik. The funeral was arranged by the Jewish National Council of Palestine, and the body was escorted by delegations representing all the national Jewish organizations and institutions.

what was sacred to one was superstition to the other. They lived in the same town, moved in the same company, began their literary careers almost in the same year, and in their death, occupy adjoining graves; but no two poets were more widely contrasted. One was the poet of the past, the other was the bard of the future; one glorified tradition and sang the song of the Bet Hamidrash and the Talmud student, the other showed meagre reverence for tradition and his song was the song of the Dawn; one crowded his pages with memories of pain, struggle and tears, the other chanted,

Life is round me, light is round me,
Magic songs and songs of glee,
Melodies from Eden's garden,
Songs of the prisoner set free.

Lovers of Bialik will do well not to touch Tchernichovski, for they will miss in him many of the things which made the former so well-beloved. Unlike Bialik, he was not a lover of the ghetto; he hated its gloom and squalor, and found its atmosphere dull and boring, its message without meaning, its appeal without power, its lament without glamour, its claim without justice. Indeed, his fiercest anger and most ringing protest were aroused by it. Instead of saving and preserving the Jew, the ghetto dwarfed and crippled him and made him a subject unfit for life. What could be more eloquent with anger and protest than the lines in his Chanukah poem?

Over the housetops on the wings of
the wind
Hover dark hosts — the shadows of
the night,
Lifeless and still, that were a mighty
band.
Staring with sockets that were an-
guished eyes:
Lo! These are the Maccabees! These
heaps of bones,
These shriveled hands, these blood-
less arteries,
These blighted brains—'tis a miracle
they live,
Who live and live not, aged ere
their time —
Sans strength or power, but with
craven cowardice
Bent double like a willow o'er the
brook,
They have not seen God's light . . .
Was it a pose, was it an affectation?

Did Saul Tchernichovski merely aim to surprise and shock his readers with a rebelliousness which, deeply, inwardly, he himself did not feel? The barest outline of the life, education and experience of this "erratic" genius will suggest the answer.

Saul Tchernichovski stands alone among the Hebrew poets in that, at his birth, in his childhood, in the whole circumstance of his life, he did not feel the chains of the ghetto. There were no ties or bonds with the past in his life — no pangs of hunger, no dark streets and crooked lanes, no dismal cheder with the sting of a melamed's whip upon his back, no tyranny of fanatic and despotic parents to rule and circumscribe his life. He also stands alone in that he was born in a rural world, with clear skies, "golden fields," and nature embellished with beauty and melody.

HAKOFOTH

By SAUL TCHERNICHOVSKI

Translated by HARRY H. FEIN

THERE'S crowding in the house of
prayer,

There's light and warmth a-glowing;
And filled it is from mouth to mouth,
All sections overflowing.
From time to time augments the noise,
Against old men are crowding boys,
They even swamp the east-wall.

Young girls and women stand penned-up,
Each chair and bench invading,
With turbans, kerchiefs of all sorts,
And Sabbath clothes parading . . .
"Come, Cantor, start!" a voice rings
clear,
Judeans captivating.

The vanguard marches leisurely,
In rhythmic measure pacing,
Each youth with flag whose gilded crown
An apple red is gracing.
They raise their flags, they raise them
loft,
And sister calls to brother soft,
And brother calls to sister.

The Cantor comes. Behind him trail
The elders, their hands clapping,
With Torah scrolls upon their arms,
Encased in 'broidered wrapping.

He was born in the year 1875 in a small village in the Crimea, the same Crimea now flowing with so much blood. Village life ran in the tradition of his family, and many of his forebears knew no other associations than primitive nature and the primitive humanity of their surroundings. It was a refreshing and healthy life which gave the poet the strong and massive frame that made him so striking and impressive a figure to behold. There is no tragedy in his childhood memories, the tragedy that tinged the early impressions of other Hebrew poets with ugliness, poverty and bitterness. He roamed the woods and the wide steppes of his native place in search of birds and flowers. He was full of play and pranks, and his playmates were mostly children of peasant folks. There was little anti-Semitism in this country life, at least none that the future poet

On gilded crowns bright, manifold
The tiny tinkling bells of gold
Are ringing and are jingling.

The Cantor comes, the Cantor chants,
The choir raise their voices;
The treasurer and deacon sing,
The crown joins and rejoices:
Tra, ra, ra, ra and bim, bim, bom —
Both young and old are frolicsome,
The rabbi's no exception.

The Torah-bearers slowly tread
Through crowds exultant, thronging,
Who seize them and kiss ardently
The Torahs with great longing.
"God grant you life this coming year!" —
"Peace be with you, abundant cheer!" —
The maidens, too, are shouting.

The house is filled with light and warmth
And mirth and laughter's buoyance;
One talks, one sings, one claps, "Please,
hush!"

Each count'nance beams with joyance.
The Cantor sings on his short tour:
"Hosanna, saviour of the poor!"
With all the crowd responding.

— From "Titans of Hebrew Verse"

could see or feel. There were no provoking acts, no turbulent scenes; the surface was clear and quiet.

He is the only Hebrew poet who could not speak Yiddish, who mastered the Russian language before he was taught Hebrew, whose genius was molded by foreign classics before he acquired the vocabulary of the Bible, who knew Pushkin and Lermontov before he made his acquaintance with the Chumash. How different all this from the usual career of most Hebrew writers who, at a tender age, master the Bible, stoop over the Talmud folios, and surprise their teachers with learned disquisitions on knotty points of the Law!

But once he was introduced into the mysteries of the Hebrew language, his progress was smooth and easy. He had wise teachers. They knew how to make him love the Bible, especially the stories that raged with battle and stormed with deeds of heroism. Joshua became his favorite hero, the man of valor and conquest. But he hated the Bible commentators, particularly Rashi, who always raised difficulties. He had not studied much Talmud, whose disputatious tone was not to the liking of the young student who looked everywhere for movement, action, adventure. But he loved the Agada and was fascinated by its curious tales and anecdotes.

He began to read the Hebrew classics, the stories of Mapu, Mendele and Feirberg, and the poems of Lebensohn the younger and Manne. He made an attempt to write himself, and composed dramas, novels and ballads, abortive attempts, but which indicated the flowering of his genius. He lost patience with the stilted and artificial phraseology of the Hebrew writers and developed a style of his own. When he could not find words or idioms to suit his mood, he would invent them. As a result, his language was often difficult, harsh and obscure, but he forged the weapons for pioneer work in Hebrew poetry.

In his parents' home there was formal piety but not fanaticism. One of his ancestors was even suspected of a mild form of religious skepticism. But the holy days were strictly observed, and the young poet relished their poetic charm and beauty. Later he left memorials to them, and one remembers with particular gratitude his poems "Leil Sabbat," "Leil Cha-

nukah," "Hakafot," "B'rit Milah," "Olat R'egel," sweet and charming lines written with intense Jewish feeling. But always, always, even in those youthful days, he was the rebel, the image-breaker, the man who felt the blood of the conquerors of the Holy Land coursing through his veins.

C R E D O

By SAUL TCHERNICHOVSKI

Translated by MAURICE SAMUEL

LAUGH at all my dreams, my dearest;
Laugh, and I repeat anew
That I still believe in man —
As I still believe in you.

For my soul is not yet unsold
To the golden calf of scorn
And I still believe in man
And the spirit in him born.

By the passion of his spirit
Shall his ancient bonds be shed.
Let the soul be given freedom,
Let the body have its bread!

Laugh, for I believe in friendship,
And in one I still believe,
One whose heart shall beat with my heart
And with mine rejoice and grieve.

Let the time be dark with hatred,
I believe in years beyond
Love at last shall bind the peoples
In an everlasting bond.

In that day shall my own people
Rooted in its soil arise,
Shake the yoke from off its shoulders
And the darkness from its eyes.

Life and love and strength and action
In their heart and blood shall beat,
And their hopes shall be both heaven
And the earth beneath their feet.

Then a new song shall be lifted
To the young, the free, the brave,
And the wreath to crown the singer
Shall be gathered from my grave.

— From "A Golden Treasure of Jewish Literature" by Leo Schwarz

The blood of the conquerors of
Canaan is mine, and ne'er to tire,
The mighty song calls me again —
the chant of blood and fire.

Saul Tchernichovski was the most versatile and accomplished of Hebrew poets. He was a voracious reader, whose range of interests covered almost the whole gamut of European literature, with special devotion to Shakespeare, Goethe, Shelley, Byron and the French classics. Of American writers, he admired particularly Longfellow, whose "Hiawatha" he later translated into Hebrew. His secular education included languages, mathematics, the natural sciences, and, in later life, medicine.

In Odessa, Tchernichovski fell under the influence of the giants of modern Hebrew literature, for the city was the home of Mendele, Ahad Haam, Bialik, Lilienblum and Klausner. The latter became his literary agent and devoted friend, and their friendship lasted to the very end of Tchernichovski's life. But the poet kept his own counsel. He was still the rebel, the trail-blazer, the Baal-worshiper, the man who clamored for a revision of Jewish values. When, in 1899, his first book of poems, "Hesvonot u-Manginot" (Visions and Songs), appeared, to the amazement and horror of his critics, it contained only four actual Jewish poems. The rest were songs, based on nature and erotic themes. When, under the influence of Dr. Herzl, political Zionism came into existence, and Ahad Haam opposed it with his creed of a cultural center in Palestine, Tchernichovski, then a very young man, characteristically enough, sided against the popular sage of Odessa and demanded a real and not a faint-hearted land for the Jews! His heart was always in the fields of battle, where hearts grow strong and fearless. And so, "To the Volunteers of the People" he sang —

Raise the banners to Zion! Raise the
banners to Zion!
Volunteers of the people, be bold in
the ascent!
While yet the blood flows through
our veins, we'll press forward,
Nor let our hand slack till the last
breath is spent.

This day we are brothers to face all
disaster,
From Ashdod to Lebanon to the isles
of the sea,
From the slopes of the north till the
nearest Damascus,

[Continued on page 17]

THE DRAMA OF THE CONFERENCE

By LOUIS LIPSKY

THE laudatory descriptions of the American Jewish Conference in the press will be dehydrated in the course of time and the objective historian will fix its true value. The great expectations expressed in advance were based on the frantic desire of Jews to find a way out of the confusion that prevails in Jewish life at this time. It was thought that a great assembly on a large platform might clear the atmosphere. The debacle of Jewish life is so terrible and Jews themselves can do so little to relieve the situation. Relief must come from the outside. But the world is too absorbed in its own affairs to concern itself with the speck of a problem which the Jewish tragedy occupies in its eyes. It is therefore necessary to shout and clamor and register feelings, impressions, demands. Symphonic unity was expected to emanate from the Conference, where all groups in Jewish life were to be assembled.

What was written during the sessions described the dramatic moments, the highlights of the more sensational addresses, and the atmosphere of the lobbies. There was no perspective at that time, nor is it known at this writing, what is going to happen to the agency the Conference set up in the form of its Interim Committee. Already fears are being expressed by impatient columnists for the future of the Conference; and the pessimists are getting a head-start by declaring that nothing will come out of the event.

In this period of lull, however, it may be allowed to revert to the sessions of the Conference and to reconstruct what might be called the "composition" of the historic event.

II.

There were two preludes to the American Jewish Conference. The Pittsburgh meeting of January, 1943, was the second. It is important to know that the Pittsburgh meeting came into being as a result of the failure of an antecedent effort to establish a program of co-operation through negotiation and private conference. Dr. Chaim Weizmann was responsible for persuading the American

Jewish Committee and its morganatic affiliate, the Jewish Labor Committee, to discuss the Jewish problems in relation to the peace that is to come. The negotiations were designed to clear up misunderstandings and to arrive at a program for united action in the Councils of Peace at the end of the war. The issues of diaspora nationalism, of how the National Home should develop into its ultimate form of self-government or statehood, of the so-called double loyalties involved in Zionism, of the immediate and the long-range program, were discussed in a friendly way, up and back, over many months. But there was no definite result, no agreed formulas, no agreement at all. It seemed that the American Jewish Committee could not reconcile certain internal differences of opinion. It was not a homogeneous body. Finally, the Committee issued a statement of its own, in which views known to be in direct contradiction of the Zionist program were advanced. This was taken to mean a rejection of the Zionist proposals. It registered the failure of the negotiations. Unable to find a way through negotiation for united action in American Jewry, it was decided to appeal to Jewish public opinion and to invoke democratic procedure; to submit the question to judgment by majority vote. The point was, who would issue the call? It is to the credit of Henry Monsky, President of the B'nai B'rith, that he stepped into the situation and called the Pittsburgh Conference, which, supported by all Jewish national organizations (with the exception of two), decided to initiate action for summoning an American Jewish Assembly. Although the American Jewish Committee was not present at Pittsburgh, it subsequently agreed to enter the committee for the organization of an American Jewish Assembly, provided two conditions it presented were accepted. One condition was that the name be changed; the second, that any organization entering the Conference and expressing its dissent on any question had the right to withdraw.

III.

The Zionists had adopted the Biltmore Hotel Resolution in 1942. In this Reso-



Louis Lipsky

lution, the term "Commonwealth" was formally introduced into the political discussion. It was not a new term. It had been used by President Wilson. It was included in the text of the Resolution of the first American Jewish Congress. But it had been absorbed in the terminology of the Balfour Declaration. It was translated in the official documents into "National Home." Being evoked at this juncture in 1942, it revealed the determination of the Zionists to avoid the ambiguities connected with the term "National Home" and to project the idea of Commonwealth as the expression of the ultimate political goal. It also asked for the control of immigration to be vested in Jewish hands in order to avoid detours and delays and frustrations in the establishment of the National Home under the administration of the Mandatory Government. This bold utterance was employed with full knowledge that it would alienate many Jews who had been drawn to Zionism and Palestine as defined in the Declaration and the Mandate. It was felt, however, that this boldness was warranted by political conditions and by Jewish needs the world over. The Biltmore Hotel Resolution became a formula accepted by the whole Zionist Organization. Nevertheless, there were fears that if this unequivocal Resolution would be pressed in the Conference—in the state of non-Zionist opinion existing at that time—many friends would be lost and a unanimous vote

would become impossible. But the Zionists seemed to be determined to go ahead with this line. They conducted a campaign of education over a period of many months. The idea of the Commonwealth was talked about and written about with a great show of militancy. There were many who felt that when the delegates of the American Jewish Conference came together, no matter how many of them were Zionists, how few were non-Zionists, the logic of the situation would compel some form of compromise in order to avoid the withdrawal of the minority.

IV.

The trained observer of Jewish life was struck, during all this time, by the strange disparity between what was being uttered on the Zionist platform and printed in the Zionist press, and what was being done in actual encounters with what was being referred to as the "opposition." Bold statement and suggestion of compromise went hand in hand. The louder the asseveration of Zionist Maximalism, the readier the asseveration seemed to be to find a way to the reconciliation of opposing views. Everything possible was done to please the representatives of the American Jewish Committee and other minorities. The idea seemed to be to make concessions on details now in order to be stronger later in forcing bold conclusions to a vote. Such concessions were made in the framing of the call, in the Rules of Election, in the precise limitation of the program. Zionists went out of their way to fraternize with the leadership of the Committee. Some even ran ahead of suggestion and made overtures on their own account, prepared memoranda for "off-the-record" consideration in order to ease the lot of the Daniels in the den of the Lions. It was suggested that the Conference might even be postponed out of deference to the views of the Committee. The first session might be an innocuous, general debate, with the real decisions and the election of a Delegation to take place later. Why hurry the process of conversion? Why not give time for adjustments to be made? Why could not, ultimately, the obnoxious terms of the Zionist Resolution be dissolved in a happy circumlocution that would be palatable to the non-Zionists? Why could not a general statement be devised that would make the

explicit implicit, but invisible? In fact, at the last minute, an effort was made to have the Conference laid over out of deference to views alleged to have been expressed in Washington.

But all these matters never reached a climax. The "off-the-record" never became a matter of record anywhere. The date for the opening of the Conference drew near. Delegates began pouring into the Waldorf-Astoria and it was obvious that whatever was to happen would have to happen within the agenda of the Conference itself.

V.

The lobbies were filled with delegates and their friends as early as Thursday, three days before the opening of the Conference. The time was consumed in caucuses of delegates under various auspices, but chiefly by the American Jewish Congress. The General Zionists avoided any caucus on matters of program and did not hold their meeting until Sunday morning, but they were very busy with the issues of "committee placements," which they seemed to regard as of the highest political importance. The Labor group developed a strong feeling about the "permanence" of the Conference and went about advocating that cause with great fervor. In the Congress caucus, only post-war problems were discussed. It was taken for granted that the problem of Palestine would be taken care of by a small committee of the Zionist Emergency Committee, which was engaged in formulating the draft of the Palestine Resolution and was still going through the tortures of editing and re-editing.

But there were no discussions with the non-Zionists in advance of the Zionist decision. There seemed to be nobody with whom discussions could be held. The only other resolution visible was the one submitted by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which had been deposited in the "hopper" waiting for something to be done with it, but no Zionist representative accosted a delegate of the Union with the suggestion for a heart-to-heart talk about the matter. So far as was known, the American Jewish Committee had no prepared resolutions of its own. It had a large bundle of negatives. It suggested that resolutions satisfactory to them should be presented, but gave no hint as to what might be satisfactory.

No Zionist seemed to have the temerity to open conversations on his own with the other side in order to provoke reactions. And yet, all the indications were that something would have to happen pretty soon to break down the walls of difference and to establish something "in between" that would get unanimous support. There was a crying need for an intermediary to negotiate a breakdown, to start the creation of an era of mutual interest. A "shatchen" was sorely needed. But no such service was forthcoming from either side.

VI.

There were many difficulties in setting up the Conference as a formal body. The foundations of a new institution were being laid. The procedure had to be agreed to by groups that had never before co-operated on a democratic basis. The organization of the Conference was still in a state of flux at the opening session. The report on elections had to be formally presented to the delegates. The procedure agreed to unofficially by the groups had to be ratified by the delegates. The relative strength of the groups had yet to be officially established. The procedure to do that remained in a state of confusion even after the Conference had been opened. The groupings did not follow party lines. Many non-Zionists could not be persuaded to enter "like-minded" groups and finally entered "unlike-minded" groups solely to secure representation on committees. The result was that general agreement had to be given at the first session to the proposal that the plenary session on Sunday evening and on Monday should be devoted to general debates. The subjects were: "Saving the Jews," "Palestine," and "Post-war Europe." The first general debate was held on Sunday evening. The committees had not yet been set up. The registry of the groups had not been completed and sealed. The intentions of the parties were still obscure. The agenda was still in the making.

Here, Dr. Wise, who was the first Zionist speaker, found himself in an awkward situation. It was intended that he should devote his address to the problem of saving the Jews of Europe. He was not prepared to open the Zionist case. He took refuge in his impression that a clash of opinion on the platform at that

time should be avoided. At any rate, he was not inclined to start what might become the first controversy of the Conference. He thus unwittingly helped to maintain the impression that the Zionists were reserving their adjustments for the committees, but in the meantime would not disturb the atmosphere of good will and peace and unity.

When the plenary session adjourned on Sunday evening and the delegates scattered, meeting in clusters at various coffee houses, there was a dead certainty in their minds that the much-discussed bold attack, the "maximalist" program, was in the process of deflation. This was confirmed the next day when "the rights of the Jewish people with reference to Palestine" was under specific discussion by speakers officially representing various groups. The general debate on "Palestine" was introduced by Dr. Nahum Goldman, who, representing the Jewish Agency, considered that it was his duty to present a thesis in which polemics would be avoided and the formal aspects of the Zionist problem would be elucidated. But the position taken by both Dr. Solomon Goldman (speaking for the General Zionists), and by Dr. James Heller (speaking, strangely enough, for the non-partisan group), continued the general impression made by Dr. Wise the evening before. They rejected the role of provocateurs. They preferred to sail the sea of generalities about which there could be no division of opinion, no acrimony, no ill-will. Dr. Heller used the occasion to make an appeal for the avoidance of an "insensate partisanship," and declared that he was greatly disturbed by many things arising not so much from consecration to principles as of consecration to party "in that narrow sense of the word of which at this juncture of our history we ought not to be guilty." Dr. Goldman could not bring himself to approach anywhere near the political aspects of the situation. He looked for signs of agreement. He had found among the delegates an agreement as to the peoplehood of the Jews, that the White Paper should be abrogated, that Jewish achievements in Palestine had been considerable, and that there should

[Continued on page 21]

GERMANY'S TRAGIC JEW

By ALFRED WERNER

IN December, 1937, I sat by the sickbed of a great and pitiful man, the poet Ernst Lissauer. The helpless giant, weighing some two hundred and twenty pounds, had been taken to the Spital der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde (Hospital of the Jewish Community) of Vienna, suffering a serious heart attack. According to the doctor, his illness had been caused by abnormal fatness and high blood-pressure. But his friends knew better. The poet's heart was simply refusing to function in a world dominated by Hitler!

Having abandoned my study of German literature and devoted myself completely to my cultural readjustment in the New World, I almost forgot my old friend Lissauer. But recently I came across his name in the late Stefan Zweig's autobiography, "The World of Yesterday." Superbly, Zweig described the man who belonged to his own generation — Lissauer was born in Berlin in 1882 — but who differed in a hundred ways from the Viennese poet — "a round little man, a jolly face above a double double-chin, bubbling over with self-importance and exuberance, stuttering in his haste, and so possessed with poetry that nothing could keep him from citing and reciting his verses again and again. But for all the laughable things he did, I had to like him because he was warm-hearted, comradely, honest and demoniacally attached to his art."

When I made his acquaintance, in the early 1930's, I soon learned that Lissauer was a profoundly unhappy person. For almost twenty years he had been a dead man, an outcast because of his "Hassgesang gegen England" (Hymn of Hate Against England), a forty-eight-line poem published in the beginning of the first World War and distributed by the millions among the soldiers of the Central Powers in pamphlet form. The power of the poem is to be felt even in translation:

"Hate by water and hate by land,
Hate of the head and hate of the
hand,
Hate of the hammer and hate of the
crown,

Hate of seventy millions, choking
down.

We love as one, we hate as one,
We have one foe and one alone —
England!"

Lissauer, who stemmed from a wealthy German-Jewish family, was an ardent German nationalist. When the war broke out, he failed to see that the Kaiser's boundless ambition and German haughtiness and imperialism were responsible, to a large extent, for the great catastrophe. All that mattered to him was that his country had been attacked. In his mind, Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister, and the English race, had done wrong, not only to Germany, but also to him, Ernst Lissauer. He first hurried to the recruiting office to enlist, but the fat little man was flatly rejected by the army doctors. Thereupon he decided to serve his country's war effort as a poet, and through his "Hassgesang" he became famous over night. The German Kaiser bestowed the Order of the Red Eagle upon him, millions of school children learned the poem by heart, it was set to music and sung in the theatres, and German as well as Austrian officers read it to their men at the various fronts of the war. I still remember how my father, coming home from his office, brought us a copy of the "hymn" and read it out loud, even though he did not approve at all of the tremendous propaganda of hatred that swept the country. But the poem was also published in the French, English, and American press as an example of the fury of German hatred. For a few months Lissauer was known to hundreds of millions all over the globe.

When Lissauer wrote his Song of Hate, he was thirty-three; when he died he was fifty-five. To his bitter disappointment none of his many works — he published some thirty books of poems, stories, dramas and criticism — came anywhere near to the popularity of his Song of Hate. Besides, after November, 1918, the same people who had praised his "Hassgesang" turned cold to him, refusing to take further notice of the "hater." They did not listen to him when he explained — as he did to me — that he regarded

[Continued on page 21]

THE REMARKABLE HISTORY OF THE FRENCH JEWS

This is the second and last of two articles. The first was published last month. — Ed.

By MABEL LYON

THE Jews of the different provinces had nothing in common with each other and they did not at first seek naturalization through the National Assembly. But the attacks on them by the deputies from Alsace and Lorraine roused them to seek their rights and on the night of August 4, 1789, the equality of all citizens was acknowledged by the authorities.

About a hundred Parisian Jews joined the National Guard and distinguished themselves by their patriotism. Berr Isaac Berr (1744-1828) led the fight for Jewish freedom. There was much intolerance in the National Assembly, which was strongly protested by Mirabeau. "The unrestricted freedom of belief is so sacred in my eyes," he said, "that even the word tolerance sounds despotic to me."

His voice was drowned by the clamor of the opposition, but a speech by another deputy, Rabaud Saint Etienne, carried the day for freedom of conscience. Robespierre also espoused their cause.

Amid strong opposition, the law was passed that "No one shall be molested because of his religious opinions, in so far as their outward expression does not disturb public order as established by law."

Preference was given to the Sephardic Jews, but a deputy protested against this distinction. Two abbés also were instrumental in securing for the non-Portuguese Jews equal rights with the others.

On November 13, 1791, Louis XVI. confirmed the full equalization for the French Jews. As a step to keep in harmony with the times, the Bible was to be translated into French according to Mendelssohn's version.

The Jews immediately justified their emancipation by their loyalty, but they took no part in the bloody acts of the Revolution.

These developments by no means ended troubles of the Jews, however, for the Religion of Reason was set up in 1793 and 1794. This might be compared to the Society of the Godless in Russia.

There were attacks on the synagogues

in Nancy. Even private meetings for religious purposes were attended with great danger. Jewish merchants and agriculturists were compelled to work on the Sabbath. The baking of Passover cakes was forbidden, and Jewish schoolmasters were ordered to conduct their pupils to the Temple of Reason.

When Napoleon came into power he at first showed admiration for the antiquity of Judaism; but after he came in contact with the Germans during his wars in Central Europe, he conceived a positive dislike for the Jews.

Although he could not shake off his prejudices, he was determined not to permit any persecution or neglect of the Jews, since he longed to be known to posterity as a just man. He imagined, however, that the Jews constituted a state within a state, and he decided to inquire into the Jewish question at the regular session of the State Council, which was under his presidency.

He also conceived the idea of calling an Assembly of prominent Jews from the various provinces to answer questions concerning their beliefs and practices.

Among the deputies were Berr Isaac Berr and his son, and Abraham Furtado, a man of great ability, eloquence and tact in public affairs. They were given three days' notice to hold a meeting in the Hotel de Ville, on the Sabbath, July 25, 1806, there to prepare their replies to the inquiries the Imperial Commissioners were to present to them.

The fact that the first meeting was to be held on a Saturday was a challenge to the religious scruples of the deputies, for the first business was to be an election of officers by means of written votes. The more orthodox among them were in favor of postponing the election, but it was decided not to give the impression that they could not subordinate themselves to the law of the land.

The Notables, as they were called, had to defend Judaism before the eyes of all of Europe, and the welfare of their brethren all over the world depended on their decisions.

The oldest member, Rabbi Solomon

Lippman, was the temporary presiding officer. Furtado was elected President of the Assembly. An officer of the guard of honor was furnished to receive the orders of the President, and their departure was greeted with military honors and the beat of drums.

Among the twelve questions propounded by the Imperial Commissioners at the second sitting of the Assembly was the one asking whether the French Jews regarded France as their country, and Frenchmen as their brothers. With one accord the Assembly exclaimed: "Aye, unto death!"

Napoleon was so pleased with the conduct of the meetings that he granted an audience to all the members. He had always pictured the Jews as cringing raggmen and usurers; instead he beheld men of fine character, intelligence and imposing appearance.

The Emperor then decided to call together the Great Synhedrion to meet October 20. It was to consist of seventy-one members and was to confirm the answers of the Assembly of Notables.

The Synhedrion met, and a formal report was presented to the authorities. Napoleon's subsequent decision, which he announced March 17, 1808, was a bitter disappointment, for he withdrew many of the privileges to Jews which he had previously granted.

What could have induced this change of heart must remain a mystery.

The rights of the Jews were not fully restored until the time of Louis Philippe in 1831. The preceding monarch, Louis XVIII and Charles X., were swayed by the clergy, and maintained an illiberal attitude toward their Jewish subjects.

WITH the Restoration begins the life of Adolphe Crémieux, whose name was given to the decree which caused such a grave disturbance in Africa recently.

Crémieux, a Jewish lawyer, held high offices in the French Government, particularly that of Minister of Justice in the Provisional Government of 1848. With Gambetta and others he headed a committee to reorganize the French State after the Franco-Prussian War, and instituted many reforms in French law.

He was an Israelite by conviction as well as by birth, and he worked indefatigably for Jewish rights. He was President of the Central Jewish Consistory of France, and in 1863 he directed The Alliance Israelite Universelle, holding the office of President, with one interruption, until his death. He felt that a powerful Jewish organization was needed to protect the interests of the Jews throughout the world. The celebrated Crémieux Decree gave full citizenship to the Jews of Algeria.

Gambetta, who succeeded Crémieux as head of the Committee at Tours, was generally declared to have been of Jewish ancestry.

The life of French Jews during the Second Empire was pleasant. It was a Golden Age of French culture, and many Jews established distinguished reputations.

There was Jacques Halevy, best known for his opera "The Jewess." He was also an eminent orator, greatly beloved by the French people, and there was national mourning at his death. Among his most famous pupils were Gounod, Massenet and Bizet. The latter, composer of "Carmen," married Genevieve Halevy, the daughter of his teacher, and the wedding was performed in the Grand Synagogue in Paris in 1860.

Meyerbeer and Offenbach, who came from Germany, were two other great Jewish composers of the period.

Sarah Bernhardt was the world-famous actress. Equally celebrated was tragedienne Rachel Felix, known as Rachel.

Napoleon III. showed his friendship for his Jewish citizens by presenting a magnificent Chanukah candelabrum to the Synagogue at Fontainebleau.

Who could have dreamed then of the storm of anti-Semitism that would sweep over France within a few decades?

The Jews took an active part in the social and political life of France, and to such an extent that non-Jewish Frenchmen like Leroy Beaulieu emphasized the spiritual connection between Frenchmen and Jews, and Ernest Rénan reminded them to be not only citizens of France, but Israelites also.

There were sporadic manifestations of Jew-hatred in 1880, particularly in Algeria, but it burst in full force in 1894 through the Dreyfus case.

The story of this notorious episode is so well known that it is unnecessary to go

into its history except to briefly review the facts.

The charge of treason against Captain Alfred Dreyfus, his degradation, his imprisonment for five long years at Devil's Island, created not only violent agitation in France, but also throughout the world. His fight, and that of his friends like Clémenceau and Anatole France, to establish his innocence was consummated by the publication by Emile Zola of his famous pamphlet, "J'accuse."

The French Government "pardoned" Dreyfus in 1899, thinking to save its face, but the fight continued until the victim had obtained complete vindication in 1906. Then the French Government attempted to make restitution by overwhelming him with honors, but he was too broken in health to enjoy them.

UP TO the Second World War, Jews held posts of distinction in the literary and political life of France. In 1940 the nine hundredth anniversary of the birth of Rashi was celebrated by the French Government. There were manifestations of anti-Semitism, however, even before the Nazi occupation of France. Leon Blum was severely beaten by fascists to the cry of "A bas les Juifs." Yet he twice attained the premiership, being the first Jew to hold that post in France.

He was actively interested in Jewish welfare work and in Zionism. He was arrested, together with other heads of the government, by the Pétain regime. At the trial, conducted in Riom, to fix responsibility for the Second World War, Blum conducted an eloquent defense on behalf of himself and his associates. This acted as a boomerang to his accusers and caused the trial to be discontinued.

As the leader of the Popular Front, Blum was blamed for some of the misfortunes of France, but no one impugned his patriotism or his unselfish service to his country.

Two of France's greatest sons have died since the Nazi occupation. George Mandel, whose name originally was Jero-beam Rothschild, passed away recently as a prisoner in Germany. He was associated with the Clémenceau Government as Chef de Cabinet, and was Minister of Colonies before the Nazi conquest. He was one of France's most ardent patriots, and advocated the continuance of the war in North Africa. He too was ar-

rested by the Pétain government. Anti-Semitic charges were often made against Mandel by his political opponents, but he never concealed his loyalty to Judaism.

Henri Bergson, the distinguished philosopher, died two years ago. He was a descendant of Polish Jews, and his mysticism may be traced to Chasidic ancestry. Bergson was the first Jew to receive the Nobel prize for literature. When the anti-Jewish laws were promulgated in France, and Jewish teachers were dismissed from their posts, he was offered exemption. But he declined to accept, and resigned his professorship at the College of France.

The bravery and patriotism of the Jewish soldiers of France cannot be forgotten, even though the Verdun Memorial to them has been defaced since the Nazi occupation of France.

There were fifty Jewish generals in France before 1930. General Baron Wolff, the grandson of Cerf Berr, fought under Louis XVIII. Six thousand French-Jewish soldiers died during the First World War.

In 1940 sixty thousand Jews fought for France, half of them refugees, for France had been a haven for the Jews of occupied Europe.

Since the war, many distinguished French-Jewish writers have enriched American literary life. Among these is Henri Bernstein, considered one of the greatest French dramatists of his generation. His play, "Israel," was written in 1908 as a protest against anti-Semitism.

Another is Andre Maurois, whose real name is Herzog. He has been an interpreter of English culture in France, and of French culture in England and the United States. Maurois is a biographer of note, and has been lecturing in America since the defeat of France. He served in the last War and recently went to Africa to join the French leaders there.

Without a doubt, Liberty and Equality will be completely restored to the Jews of France after the War. Let us hope that the poison of anti-Semitism which has been spread in France in recent years will gradually be eradicated, and that Fraternity, the third member of that grand triumvirate of political virtues of the France that was, will be extended to all patriotic citizens of the French Republic.

THE NEWS OF THE MONTH

THE British Government, through Colonial Secretary Col. Oliver Stanley, made a statement in the House of Commons on November 10 that the policy laid down in the White Paper would be adhered to. There would be only one slight deviation: the White Paper provided for admission to Palestine of 75,000 Jews in the five-year period ending March 31, 1944, based on the entry of 10,000 immigrants per year, and, "as a contribution towards the solution of the Jewish refugee problem," the admission of 25,000 more. "The war," said Col. Stanley, "has prevented the fulfillment of this program. The number of Jews who entered Palestine legally or illegally up to September 30, 1943 is 43,922. There are thus 31,078 who, it may be fairly assumed, would have reached it before March 31, 1944, but for the exigencies of the war. The British Government has been considering this position and has reached the conclusion that it would be unequitable to close the doors of Palestine to those persons on account of the time factor."

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At the time of preparation of this news digest the Zionist world was still waiting for enlightenment on the Ben-Gurion-Weitzmann differences. After Ben-Gurion's resignation from the Jewish Agency a Palestine paper explained that "the cause of Ben-Gurion's resignation should not be sought in divergencies based on principles. The resignation resulted from Dr. Weitzmann's disregard of the opinions of other members of the Zionist Executive. For many years he has not consulted these members on the most important problems." The London *Jewish Chronicle*, in a cable from Palestine, reported: "People who have spoken to Ben-Gurion declared that he categorically states that he does not intend to withdraw his resignation."

However, Moshe Shertok, another member of the Jewish Executive, at a meeting in Haifa, expressed the hope that

This digest includes material supplied by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, whose coverage of Jewish news is world-wide.

the friction between Dr. Weitzmann and Ben-Gurion would be eliminated.

Dr. Weitzmann had been asked to come to Palestine to discuss the Ben-Gurion resignation but cabled the Jewish Agency Executive that he regretted his inability to comply because he was engaged in political conversations in London which may have an important effect on Palestine's post-war status. He suggested that Ben-Gurion and other members of the Executive join him in London and take part with him in his activities there. He also urged the Executive to persuade Ben-Gurion to withdraw his resignation.

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TAKING part in the Cairo conference to establish a Pan-Arabian Federation was a delegation of Palestine Arabs. The Egyptian premier declared, it was reported from Cairo, that Arabs would have to reconcile themselves to living in peace with the Jews. But at the same time the important Arabian dailies began publishing in daily instalments translations of the White Paper.

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AN important step in behalf of Jewish refugees was taken in Congress by a bipartisan group led by Gillette and Rogers,

Democrats from Iowa and California, and Baldwin, New York Republican. They sponsored resolutions in the House and Senate authorizing President Roosevelt to appoint a commission to develop a program of saving the doomed Jews of Europe. The resolution proposed the establishment of camps in neutral countries bordering the occupied territories where shelter and temporary relief could be given to those Jews able to escape the Nazi death trap.

This action was in welcome contrast to an attack against Jews made on the floor of Congress last month when the House voted to wipe off the legislative books the act which excludes Chinese from emigrating into the United States, and to permit 105 Chinese to enter the country yearly.

In opening the debate on the measures, Rep. William P. Elmer, a Missouri Democrat, stated that the repeal of the act would mean "a blitzkrieg of sympathetic eloquence over the plight of the Jews [among other European persecuted groups]." He added that "nearly every nation of Europe has chased out the Jews" and concluded that "there must have been compelling reasons for their actions."

GENERAL MOISHA MA TWO-GUN COHEN

GENERAL Morris Abraham Cohen, legendary military adviser to the rulers of the Chinese Republic, is reported in the London press to be among the repatriates from Japan aboard the Swedish exchange liner *Gripsholm*.

General Cohen, who has also been known as Cohen Moisha, General Ma, General "Two-Gun" Cohen, General Moisha-Ke and under various other sobriquets, has as many lives as a cat, if one takes at face value the reports concerning him which have appeared in the press during the past decade. His most recent demise was reported in a Canadian newspaper in March, 1942, when it was said that he had been captured and shot by the Japanese in Hong Kong. However, in May of last year, Manchester, England, newspapers disclosed that

his brother had received a cable from the British attache in Chungking denying reports of his death. That was the last published report concerning him until this week's dispatches.

Cohen met Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, founder of the Chinese Republic, in Vancouver, Canada, in the years before the Chinese Republic was established when Dr. Sun was in exile. A confidant of Canada's Chinese population, whose language he learned to speak, Cohen was placed in charge of a Chinese labor battalion during World War I. His fame spread among the Chinese, and after the war he was invited to come to China as Dr. Sun's bodyguard. From that time on he remained in China, ultimately becoming a general in the Chinese Army.

ANTI-SEMITIC hoodlums smeared "Jew" on the windows of about 100 stores in the main shopping district of Hartford, Conn. Vandalism of a similar nature occurred in Bridgeport, Conn. There several youths were arrested. In Boston, Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam charged that the beating of Jewish boys in the Jewish sections of that city was the work of organized fascist groups, and wanted to know who was financing the distribution of anti-Semitic literature throughout the United States.

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THE interim group of the American Jewish Conference, headed by Dr. Stephen S. Wise and Henry Monsky, issued a statement condemning the recent withdrawal of the American Jewish Committee from the Conference (mainly because of opposition to Zionism). The statement follows:

"The American Jewish Committee has isolated itself and has introduced divisiveness in the councils of American Jewry which is calculated to impair the effectiveness of the efforts on behalf of the Jewish people in the hour of its greatest need.

"This act of withdrawal is the more unjustifiable in that, prior to the sessions of the American Jewish Conference, the conditions of the American Jewish Committee for its entry were accepted, without, however, infringing on the central principle of seeking, through democratic processes, to secure agreement on a program of action in the area of post-war rehabilitation and the implementation of the Jewish rights with reference to Palestine."

The latest reaction to the American Jewish Committee's break with the Conference was the decision of the executive of the United Synagogues of America to withdraw from the Committee. The Haddassah has also withdrawn, as has the Rabbinical Assembly of America.

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THE Argentine Government has been breaking out into further manifestations of anti-Semitism. It has closed down Jewish relief and social organizations, and is reported to be planning to deprive naturalized Jews of their citizenship for the purpose, it is thought, of expelling them as aliens.

This news was brought to Montevideo

by Jews who left Argentina because of this ominous situation. Other of these "refugees" have gone to Chile and Uruguay. They reported that one of the prominent Argentinian Jews scheduled for expulsion is Alberto Gerchunoff, a political writer who recently visited the United States as guest of the State Department. Gerchunoff, who has lived in the Argentine since he was a child, was one of the 150 Argentine notables who signed an appeal to the Ramirez government asking for a break in relations with Germany.

☆

PALESTINE is about to ease Britain's orange and lemon famine. With the Mediterranean open for Allied shipping, a large quantity of the fruits is about to be sent to England. Announcement to this effect was made by the British Ministry of Food. The citrus imports will reach a total, it is expected, of two million cases by spring. This development will revive the failing citrus industry in Palestine.

☆

AN Arab commission has arrived in Canada. Its purpose is to carry on political activity in influential circles. Canadian Zionists are being urged to combat the expected Arab anti-Zionist propaganda by the creation of pro-Zionist committees.

☆

THE Greek-Jewish Settlers Association of Tel Aviv adopted a resolution ap-

pealing to the International Red Cross to ascertain the fate of 53,000 Salonika Jews who were deported from Greece to Eastern Europe early this year.

☆

THE Swedish press reports that more than 600 Jews in Northern Italy have been either killed or sent to "unknown destinations" in the two weeks ending last month.

☆

THE American Zionist Emergency Council has reorganized in a move to decentralize responsibility and to speed mobilization of all forces in American Jewry to further Jewish aspirations in Palestine, it was announced by Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, chairman of the executive committee.

Fourteen committees have been established to carry forward a program to win public opinion in America. The immediate objective of all the committees is to work for the abandonment of the White Paper policy.

☆

THE annual conference of the Jewish farmers passed a resolution urging the thousands of Jewish farmers in this country to form an "all-American Jewish farm organization." The conference also endorsed the plans of the American Jewish Conference, favored the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, condemned the White Paper, and appealed to the

THE REVOLT AGAINST THE DEATH VANS

THE recent revolt of Jewish prisoners in the Treblinka "death camp" in Poland, during which a good part of the camp was burned down and many prisoners escaped, was made possible when an underground organization of young Jewish men and women within the camp succeeded in establishing contact with a band of Polish guerrillas who supplied some arms and ammunition, it was revealed in a report received by Polish Jewish circles.

One day early last month, Gestapo "death vans," on which portable gas chambers were mounted, drove into the camp and a number of Jews were ordered to board them. The Jews refused, and flung grenades, which they had hidden

under their clothing, at the Nazi guards. This was the signal that had been agreed upon. Immediately the Jewish prisoners opened fire on the Germans from three sides. The guerrillas, hearing the gunfire, broke into the camp and also attacked the guards.

During the battle, a number of Germans and many Jews were killed, while other Jews succeeded in fleeing after first destroying the death vans. The following day the Germans offered large rewards for information leading to the recapture of the fugitives. The report says that the story of the Treblinka revolt has spread all over occupied Poland, where it is considered as daring as the battle in the Warsaw ghetto.

United States Government to influence Britain to keep Palestine open to Jewish immigration.

☆

UNDER the terms of the will of Solomon Bublick, who died in Minneapolis in October, \$50,000 of the \$54,500 he left will go into unusual awards. \$25,000 will be presented to the person performing the greatest deed to benefit the Jewish people, and an equal amount will be the prize for the best book, play, poem or essay relating to Judaism.

☆

THE first Jew to succeed in reaching London from Warsaw after the epic battle in the ghetto there is "Edward Warszawski"—an assumed name. He reported that possibly between 100,000 and 500,000 Jews are still in Poland.

"Strange as it may seem," Warszawski said, "there was a great wave of optimism among the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto during the battle that raged there. The Warsaw Jews, aware of the fact that they would eventually be crushed by the superior military force of the Germans, were nevertheless imbued with the spirit that the Jewish people will live long after the Germans are defeated in this war.

"Intense cultural activity and a wonderful revival of religious feelings marked Jewish life in the ghetto despite the fact that conditions became worse for them with every day. At the same time Jews continued to secure arms smuggled into the ghetto for months through various ways."

Warsawski said that many Poles helped the Jews at the risk of being severely punished by the Germans. One of every six Poles suffered in one way or another from the extermination methods which the Germans began to apply to the Polish population after "disposing" of hundreds of thousands of Jews, he stated.

☆

THE 100th anniversary of the birth of Moshe Leib Lilienblum, one of the founders of the "Lovers of Zion" in Russia, which predated the modern Zionist movement, was marked last month by the Jewish National Fund at ceremonies at Kfar Malal, the Palestinian colony named after Lilienblum, which was founded about 20 years ago.

At the United States Naval Hospital

BEN BERNIE'S LAST CURTAIN

ONE of the most popular Jewish vaudevillians, Ben Bernie, died on October 20, in Los Angeles, at the age of 52. He had been ill of a pulmonary infection for a long time and his end came as a result of cardiac complications.

Bernie (his real name was Anzelevitz) was liked and admired in the theatrical profession and his death brought sorrow to all Broadway. What the general public did not know was that he wore a brace most of his life, his back having been injured in a boyhood football game. He was often in pain when his famous banter was most amusing.

The *New York Times* published an obituary biography of unusual length, which is reprinted below:

"Ben Bernie was born on Attorney Street, on the lower East Side.

"His father, who had a horseshoeing establishment on South Street under the spreading roadway of the Brooklyn Bridge, had a difficult time to feed the eleven children, and when Ben was 6 years old the family moved to Bayonne, N. J., where the father became, as it were, the village blacksmith.

"Seven years later the family moved back to Manhattan. He attended the Townsend Harris High School, from which he was graduated. Meanwhile he studied at the New York College of Music with the idea of becoming a violinist.

He gave a concert at the age of 15 in Carnegie Hall, but, as he told it later, Mischa Elman made his American debut in the same concert hall the next week and the comparison was too painful. He decided to become an engineer.

"Ben enrolled at Cooper Union. He stayed there three years, helping out the family income by teaching violin at the Mozart Conservatory of Music, a place which gave away a guitar with every ten lessons.

"In 1908 he gave up school and got a job as a fiddler at a place on Twenty-ninth Street near Sixth Avenue, known as Old Heidelberg. He went from there to the Gem, an early Marcus Loew amusement place. Here he was a \$12-a-week piano player. A year later Joseph Schenck, then a general booker of the Loew vaudeville circuit, gave him an opportunity for a week's tryout at the Columbia Theatre, Brooklyn.

"Ben, who had changed his surname to Ansel, got a ten-week contract at \$25 a week and went across the continent in day coaches. He was booked as Ben, the Eccentric Violinist. In San Francisco he teamed with Charles Klass, forming an accordion-and-violin act. It was his custom to ask requests from the audience and at that time he developed the ban-

[Continued on page 23]

in St. Albans, New York, Commanding Officer L. L. Pratt formally received a \$10,000 gift of hospital equipment from the National Council of Jewish Women. The equipment included a radio call system to reach every part of the hospital, superficial therapy X-ray machine, three diathermy units and three ultra-violet ray lamps.

☆

THE American Council for Judaism which is opposed to political Zionism, has started a campaign for membership under an eight-point program published in the first issue of its semi-monthly publication. The eight points are:

We believe that: 1. The basis of unity among Jews is religion. 2. Jews consider themselves nationals of those countries in which they live and those lands their homelands. 3. The present tragic plight

of our fellow Jews can be remedied only through ultimate victory for and a beneficent program of reconstruction and rehabilitation, for men of all faiths, undertaken by the United Nations. 4. The United Nations should attempt to provide the earliest feasible repatriation of resettlement under the best possible conditions of all uprooted victims of Axis aggression. 5. Numerous localities must be found throughout the world where resettlement can be effected under favorable auspices. Palestine, due to its splendid accomplishments, should continue to be one of the places where resettlement should be fostered. 6. Any hopeful future for Jews in Palestine depends upon the ultimate establishment of a democratic government there, in which Jews, Moslems and Christians shall be justly represented.

We oppose: 7. The effort to establish a Jewish National State in Palestine or elsewhere, and its corollary, a Jewish Army, as a project that has been and will be deleterious to the welfare of Jews in Palestine and throughout the world. 8. We oppose all philosophies that stress the racialism, the nationalism and homelessness of the Jews as injurious to their interests.

☆

THE Moscow radio reported that the Germans had murdered 20,000 Jews in the city of Dnepropetrovsk, now liberated by the Russian Army. It added that the last 12,000 Vilna Jews, deported by the Germans some time ago to isolated places in Lithuania, had perished.

☆

SWEDISH press reports say that property of Danish Jews which the Germans confiscated and shipped to the Reich is now being distributed among "families in Germany who have shown courage during the Anglo-American air raids" on various German cities.

☆

ROBERT SZOLD, American Zionist leader, has arrived in Palestine. He is the first representative of the American Zionist movement to reach that country since the entry of the United States into the war.

Ben Eliezer, a representative of the American Emergency Committee to save the Jews of Europe, also arrived there. At a press conference he said that he brought a letter from Mayor LaGuardia of New York to Mayor Rokach of Tel Aviv in which the hope is expressed that Palestine will solve the Jewish problem after the war.

☆

PRO-DEMOCRATIC Finnish newspapers received in Stockholm carry attacks against the chief of the state police, Anthoni, for his alleged responsibility for the mistreatment of Jewish refugees. Demanding his removal, the *Arbetsbladet* says that the plan to deport the refugees to Germany was luckily frustrated, "otherwise Finland would have been disgraced forever."

☆

HENRIK W. DE KAUFFMANN, Danish Minister to the United States, says that 5,000 Jews have escaped from Denmark in the three weeks since the Nazis there decreed deportation.

Mr. de Kauffmann stated that Denmark, with a population of 6,000 Jews, had taken in an additional 2,000 Jewish refugees from other lands occupied by Hitler.

☆

The Crémieux Decree, which was abrogated in 1941 by the Vichy government of Marshal Pétain and later by Gen. Henri Giraud, was reinstated by the French Committee for National Liberation. The 140,000 native Algerian Jews who were deprived of their French citizenship by abrogation of the decree, have thus had all their pre-war rights restored.

The Crémieux Decree, which was issued in 1870, will govern the Jews of Algeria until the French Republic is re-established. The act came as a result of pressure on the part of liberal elements, including Gen. de Gaulle, who considered repeal of the decrees to be an anti-Jewish measure contrary to the principles of a democratic France.

While the Vichy government abrogated the Crémieux Decree under German pressure, Gen. Giraud explained his repeal of the decree as motivated by a desire to keep the Jews of Algeria on the same status as the Moslems there, despite the fact that the Moslems, for various reasons, preferred not to accept French citizenship.

☆

MAX REINHARDT died on October 30 at his New York home, 114 East 52nd Street, after a short illness. He was seventy. Three weeks ago, while directing the production of the operetta "La Belle Helene," he suffered a stroke. Pneumonia developed. With him at his death were his wife, the former Helene Thimig, Austrian actress whom he married in 1935, and two sons, Sgt. Gottfried Reinhardt and Wolfgang Reinhardt. (A sketch of Reinhardt's life appeared in the *Review* last month.)

AUSTRALIA has agreed to permit refugees to seek employment in many war industries hitherto barred to them.

A new ruling gives special status to aliens who are political or religious refugees, placing them in virtually the same category as nationals of neutral nations. Guarantees by Jewish authorities concerning the trustworthiness of the refugees will be acceptable by the government.

HONOR ROLL

The following is an additional list of members, sons and grandsons of Center members serving with the United States armed forces. The list includes names received up to the time of going to press.

○

Forman, Melvin M.
Katlowitz, Irwin, Pfc.
Levinthal, Jay Goell, S I/C
Model, Bernard J., Pvt.
Rubin, Donald
Shapiro, Richard I., Pfc.

○

The following is a list of promotions in rank:

Geduld, I. Joseph, Pfc.
Goldman, Daniel S., Sgt.
Goldsmith, Donald B., Lt.
Koch, Lawrence J., Pfc.
Lipshutz, Raymond, Cpl.
Meisel, Samuel J., Pfc.
Moskowitz, Melvin, Cpl.
Shiffman, Sidney, Lt.
Zirn, Benjamin, Pfc.

○

SAUL TCHERNICHOVSKI — REBEL POET

[Continued from page 7]

The flower of us fight to the death
to be free.

Raise the banners to Zion, O warriors
of Judah!

The Lord God is mighty, our strong-
hold and aid;

If there be no walls, friends, then
we'll be the ramparts,

Our corpses the bastion, our hearts
the stockade!

Heidelberg and Lausanne entered his life. In both towns he studied fiercely, eagerly, furiously; in both towns he roamed about, seeking love and beauty as feverishly and passionately. He described both in lines which, for their almost fantastic beauty, have no equal in any literature. He was almost pagan in his love of nature, pagan in his divining its every mood and secret, pagan — or pantheist — in trying to share with it his life, his thoughts, his emotions.

He was Jewish, of course, and he felt his people's smart deeply. He was among the first singers of Zion, and would have given his all to improve their lot. In a letter to a friend he wrote: "The lot of my people is very hard. I determined to go out and save my people, to devote all my energies to them, to place the fragments of my heart among their slain. But I have done nothing, for I was entangled in chains of roses. Thousands of blossoms in all their riot of color and beauty were opening in my heart."

The first Kishinev riots came. They shook the whole world, and Bialik wrote his mighty "The City of Slaughter" and "The Scroll of Fire." But Tchernichovski was mute. When his friend, Joseph Klausner, chided him for his silence, Tchernichovski wrote back: "All poets should by right be poets of conquest, but the ugliness of life, poverty, oppression and evil, make them poets of defeat. I am a poet of conquest; but, as a Jew, it is my destiny to be a poet of defeat. And against this fate I struggle, and even as a Jew, I am the bearer of the song of conquest. But when I feel defeated, I am silent, for the conquered have no songs but dirges."

He returned to Russia to practise his medical profession in a number of small towns and villages, where he did not see

a Jew in months. He lived in poverty and without recognition; he was treated almost as a stranger. Still, poems and stories flowed from his fertile pen. During and after the first World War, he lived alternately in Russia, Germany and, eventually, in Palestine, always without friends, without notice, without means. "People who hear that I am a doctor think that I am a Doctor of Philosophy; those who do know that I am a Doctor of Medicine, pay no attention to me because of the money I am making from literature, while the literary busybodies envy the wealth I am deriving from medicine."

Saul Tchernichovski's poems appeared in ten volumes, by far the largest output of any Hebrew poet. Besides his original songs and ballads and "Baruch mi-Magenza," which, as a historical narrative poem stands in a class by itself as the greatest in Hebrew literature, he enriched Hebrew letters with a number of translations from the poetic works of the classical and modern writers.

Few men were as lavish, as inexhaustible as he. He worked almost to the very end, when death took the pen out of his hand. To him all the forms of the poetic art had become revealed. He did a good deal of work outside the field of poetry, a Hebrew "Dictionary of Medical Terms," for example, and made an attempt at dramaturgy with a play which he called, "Bar Cochba." He wrote with passion and with great ease. He was also a great technician and created his own forms. He helped to modernize Hebrew poetry, and had a feeling for melody such as was given to no other Hebrew poet. His poems literally sing as they are read. No translation can do justice to their beauty.

One might write at length on still other aspects of Tchernichovski's genius, for he was the most modern, the most European, the most daring of Hebrew poets. He was at home in many literatures, absorbed, digested and assimilated the masterpieces of many lands and ages. He opened the windows and let in Hebrew readers on the currents and movements of the outside world. He enlarged and deepened the literary horizon of his people and saved it from insularity. He

was as indefatigable as a translator as he was an original as a creator. And his translations cover a wide variety of subjects. They include Babylonian, Egyptian and Greek masterpieces, comedies, epics, poems; they include works by Theocritus, Moliere, Longfellow, Burns, Shelley, Musset, Goethe. He rendered into ringing Hebrew the philosophical dialogues of Plato and Homer's "Iliad" and "Odyssey." He translated the Finnish epic poem, "Kalevala," and for this work received from Finland the decoration of the "White Rose." In his will, however, he directed that this decoration be returned to the Finnish Government.

His foreign flirtations did not blunt the edge of his own genius. His dwelling in gardens not of his people failed to influence the style and manner of his writing. He was perhaps the most original of Hebrew poets. While Bialik harked back to the Prophets, he looked within himself. What rebelliousness there was in him came from within and not from without, from his dissatisfaction with the old forms, the old traditions, the old life, rather than from any other source. Whereas the products of the other poets were the results of pain and suffering, his were rooted in his own nature — the outflow of a sunny and exuberant life which even subsequent disappointments failed to dampen.

It is an odd footnote to Tchernichovski's life that although his first poem was published in a Hebrew periodical in Baltimore, he is not as well known in this country as some other Hebrew poets.

Australian Colony

DETAILS of his negotiations with the Australian Government with regard to the establishment of a Jewish settlement in the Kimberley district of Western Australia through Jewish mass-immigration from European countries were given in New York at a press conference by Dr. I. Steinberg of the Jewish Free-Land League.

Dr. Steinberg, who arrived recently en route from Australia to London, emphasized that the project has the support of all the church leaders in Australia, as well as of the labor unions and the leaders of commerce and industry. The Western Australian Government has approved the plan, under which a territory as big as Belgium would be opened for Jewish colonization.

BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER ACTIVITIES

Chaplain Joshua Goldberg To Preach This Friday Night

THIS Friday night at our late services which begin at 8:30 o'clock we shall have the privilege to have as our guest preacher, Chaplain Joshua L. Goldberg, Lt. Commander in the United States Navy, who will preach on the subject, "Culture or Civilization."

Chaplain Goldberg is one of the first Rabbis who have enlisted as Chaplain in the present war. He is known to many of our members because of the fact that he was one of the first members of our faculty in the Hebrew School and was connected with us for many years before he began his studies for the Rabbinate. He is the Rabbi of the Jewish Center in Astoria.

His appearance in our pulpit will mark our observance of Navy Day which the American people are observing this month.

Cantor Rubin Tucker will lead in the congregational singing and will also render a musical selection.

We hope that many of our members, their families and friends will join us at this very important service.

Advance Notice

RABBI LEVINTHAL will preach on the subject "The Jew — Race, Nationality or Religion?" at the late Friday night services on December 3.

Institute of Jewish Studies For Adults Now Open

THE Institute of Jewish Studies for Adults began its eleventh season a few weeks ago with a very fine enrollment. Rabbi Levinthal has extended the time for registration in order to enable those who have not yet joined these classes to do so.

The schedule of courses is as follows:

On Tuesday evenings at 8 o'clock, Mrs. Bush Steinboch lectures in Jewish history and Dr. Michael Higger gives a course in the text of the Talmud. The text studied this year is *Baba Metzia*. At 9 o'clock Dr. Higger gives a lecture course interpreting the legendary and

folk-lore passages in the Talmud.

On Thursday evenings we have all the courses in Hebrew: Mrs. Serbin-Beder teaches the beginners' class at 9 o'clock; Miss Ungar the second class at 8 o'clock; Miss Rubee the advanced course at 8 o'clock and Mr. Edelhait gives a translation course in passages of the Bible at 9 o'clock.

There is a special women's class which meets on Wednesday in the morning taught by Mrs. Helen Levinthal Lyons. The course in Jewish History is given at 10 o'clock and the course in Bible and Prayer Book at 11 o'clock.

Members are urged to enroll in one or more of these courses.

Center Protests American Jewish Action

AT the last joint meeting of the Board of Trustees and Governing Board of the Brooklyn Jewish Center a resolution was unanimously adopted protesting the action of the American Jewish Committee in withdrawing from the American Jewish Conference.

In line with the above decision, our President, Judge Emanuel Greenberg, has sent the following letter to Judge Proskauer:

DEAR JUDGE PROSKAUER:

At a regular joint meeting of the Board of Trustees and Governing Board of the Brooklyn Jewish Center held last night, Wednesday, October 27, 1943, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"Resolved that the Brooklyn Jewish Center expresses to the officers of the American Jewish Committee its keen disappointment and its great sorrow at the action taken by the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Committee at its meeting held last Sunday, October 24, 1943 at which they withdrew from the American Jewish Conference.

"The Brooklyn Jewish Center together with the great majority of American Jewry looked with the greatest hope and satisfaction on the organization of the American Jewish Conference which was to serve as a unifying force of all Ameri-

can Jewry.

"We deplore this act of the American Jewish Committee primarily because it breaks the much desired unity of American Jewry these tragic days.

"The Brooklyn Jewish Center voices its earnest hopes and makes a sincere plea to the American Jewish Committee that it reconsider its action and that it once again join the American Jewish Conference, which can be of such valuable service in helping world Jewry solve the many vexing problems that face it today.

"It is further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the American Jewish Committee."

Sincerely yours,

EMANUEL GREENBERG

President

Next Program Meeting of the Sisterhood on Monday, December 13

THE women of the Center are urged to remember the date of the next meeting of our Sisterhood which will be held on Monday afternoon, December 13 at 1:30 o'clock.

A very fine program is being arranged, the details of which will be announced in the next issue of the Bulletin.

Red Cross Production Department

THE Red Cross Production Department has now resumed its activities and will be open for work on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. Surgical dressings in the Auditorium on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. and evenings from 7:30 to 10:30. Come and bring your friends.

A Letter of Praise from the American Red Cross

WE have received the following letter from Col. Bigley of the American Red Cross addressed to Mrs. Maurice Bernhardt, Chairman of our Production Department:

MY DEAR MRS. BERNHARDT:

For a long time it has been my desire to visit the Red Cross Unit at the Brooklyn Jewish Center for one purpose and that is to express to you and to the ladies connected with your Unit my own and

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The following have applied for membership in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

ANDERMAN, MAX

Res. 558 Montgomery St.

Bus. Curtains — 230 Fifth Ave.

Married

Proposed by Philip Palevsky

BLICKSTEIN, LESTER

Res. 555 Kingston Ave.

Bus. Rayons — 50 Bond St.

Married

Proposed by Harry Blickstein

COHEN, MRS. GOLDDYE P.

Res. 201 Crown St.

Proposed by Mrs. Benj. Katz

GOLDSMITH, EMANUEL

Res. 372 Brooklyn Ave.

Bus. Paper — 10 N. 10th St., Bklyn.

Married

Proposed by Isaac Schrier

GOLDSTEIN, HARRY

Res. 609 Montgomery St.

Bus. Teacher — 29 Ft. Greene Pl.

Married

Proposed by Frank Schaeffer

GOTKIN, HARRY

Res. 394 Alabama Ave.

the Board of Directors' deep appreciation of your unselfish and patriotic work and for the devotion you have manifested in Red Cross during these strenuous days. Unfortunately my time has been so taken up that I have not had the opportunity of making this visit and so take this media to express to you how much I appreciate the great work being done at the Brooklyn Jewish Center.

As the winter season approaches, the Brooklyn Chapter will be called upon again to greatly expand its program, and I know when we call upon your Unit for redoubled effort we shall get a hundred per-cent response.

I do hope you will say to your ladies for me, "Thank you."

Very sincerely,

J. H. BIGLEY

Executive Director

Bar Mitzvah

A HEARTY Mazel Tov is extended to Dr. and Mrs. Bernard Smulow of 255 Eastern Parkway upon the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Jerry, which will be celebrated at the Center this Sabbath morning, November 27.

Bus. 302 W. 37th St.

Single

Proposed by Samuel Schoenfeld and

Albert Witty

GREENHOLTZ, BEN

Res. 473 Crown St.

Bus. Mfg. — 225 W. 37th St.

Married

Proposed by Irving Kabram and

Dr. L. Nelson

KESSLER, HARRY

Res. 770 St. Marks Ave.

Bus. Mfg. — 12 E. 22nd St.

Married

Proposed by Tobias Zwerdling

KRONISH, HERBERT

Res. 919 Park Pl.

Bus. 44 Court St.

Married

Proposed by Emanuel Greenberg and

Charles Fine

MEYER, LAWRENCE

Res. 543 Crown St.

Bus. Attorney — Municipal Bldg., Bklyn.

Married

Proposed by M. Neinken

NATFELSON, MISS AGNES

Res. 195 Underhill Ave.

Bus. Teacher — Thomas Jefferson H. S.

Single

Proposed by Rabbi M. Lewittes

RAEDER, DR. ARTHUR

Res. 615 Eastern Pkwy.

Bus. Dentist — Same

Single

Proposed by Benj. Markowe and

Louis Kotimsky

RINGLE, SAMUEL

Res. 2018 — 70th St.

Bus. Retail Shoes — 94 Delancey St.

Married

Proposed by Harry Samburg

RIVKIN, LOUIS

Res. 1025 St. Johns Pl.

Bus. Mfg.

Married

Proposed by Jacob S. Doner

ROSS, ALBERT

Res. 270 Crown St.

Bus. Chemicals — 125 W. 33rd St.

Married

Proposed by Arthur Basescu and

Dr. Wm. Douglas

SIEGEL, MILTON

Res. 1614 Bedford Ave.

Bus. Radio — 1619 Bedford Ave.

Married

Proposed by Milton Chasin

SWARZMAN, OSCAR

Res. 919 Park Pl.

Bus. Rainbow Shops — 42 Amboy St.

Married

Proposed by Isidor Fine and

Mrs. Tillie Leff

WEINER, CAPT. IRVING

Res. 1476 President St.

Married

Proposed by Adolph Rosenheim

WELISH, HERBERT

Res. 75 Ocean Ave.

Bus. Machinist — Bklyn. Navy Yard

Single

The following have applied for reinstatement in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

EISENBERG, ISRAEL

Res. 770 St. Marks Ave.

Bus. Retail — 163-34 Jamaica Ave.

Single

FINE, JESSE J.

Res. 135 Eastern Pkwy.

Bus. Attorney

Married

Proposed by Isidor Fine and

Mrs. Tillie Leff

GUNTHER, BEN W.

Res. 160 Central Park W.

Bus. Underwear — 588 Broadway

Single

Proposed by Ben Martz

HUTT, NATHAN

Res. 640 Montgomery St.

Bus. Hat Mfg. — 580 Broadway

Married

KIINGER, HERMAN

Res. 170 Hawthorne St.

Bus. 230 W. 38th St.

Married

Proposed by Albert Glickman

ROSENFELD, I. B.

Res. 748 St. Marks Ave.

Bus. Cotton Goods — 729 Broadway

Married

SALTZMAN, DR. EDWARD A.

Res. 290 New York Ave.

Bus. Physician — Same

Proposed by Joseph M. Schwartz

[Additional applications on page 22]

"JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES"

[Continued from page 4]

Isaiah Lippman, from Fort Sam Houston, Texas, added his praise to the J. W. B.: "It will interest you to know, that the Jewish Welfare Board is doing a remarkably fine job, as usual. Have been in contact with this organization in various towns throughout Texas, and can utter nothing but praise. San Antonio, which lies outside this post, took care of all Jewish boys for the Rosh Hashonah holiday and did a wonderful job in synagogues and homes."

A very interesting observation was made by Ben Zirn, who is in Camp Barkeley, Texas: "I was very pleased to receive your letter, for it made me happy to know that we boys in the service are constantly being thought of and remembered by our friends and teachers back at the Brooklyn Jewish center. It wasn't so long ago that I used to devote an hour and fifteen minutes, five days a week, to learning how to be a good Jew and a better American. Little did I realize, at that time, how valuable, and how important those lessons I so earnestly studied would be in the near future. It gives me pleasure to express to you, my appreciation for all that the Hebrew School Classes have taught me. When I went to Hebrew School, the big thought in mind was to get a diploma, not a practical education. I'm thankful, now, that my parents sent me to Hebrew School and kept me 'on the ball' all eight years. It taught me the invaluable history of my people, gave me an insight into the pleasures and cruelties of the world, and, most of all, taught me how to get along with my fellow Americans, Jew and Gentile, alike. I have met Jewish boys from all over the country and in every case those boys who go to Services Friday night and have had a Hebrew education are the leaders in their platoons. I know, without boasting in any sense, that that is true in my case."

Lieut. Sidney H. Saffer, writing from overseas, hinted at what so many of us realize, that there is need for the quickening of the morale and the fighting spirit of the people at home. "With so many of our boys out here (South West Pacific) and other parts of the world, it is good to know that there are teachers,

of your calibre, at home to keep up the morale of our Jewish families. The morale of our boys here is good; that of our folks at home requires bolstering by leaders like yourself from time to time. Although we have no Synagogue here, my thoughts on Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur were with all our people at home, and the feeling that next year will find most all our boys at home in the Synagogue, where we should be, is a joyous one."

I must reserve for future issues further interesting comments and observations conveyed in this cherished correspondence with our men in uniform. I want to close, however, by quoting in full a letter from one of our members, Col. H. I. Tepererson, a prominent physician in our community who enlisted at the very outbreak of the war. To his credit it must be said that as soon as he arrived in the military camp he concerned himself with the religious welfare of the Jewish men he found there. He has often written to me, describing the needs of the men, and he was helpful in a large measure in bringing improvement in that field of service. This is what he wrote now from Fort Jackson, S. C., where he is rendering fine service in the 74th General Hospital:

"Thank you for your kind New Year's message. To one away from home and family your words are indeed comforting. I might add that I receive the *Center Review* regularly and enjoy its lucid articles on national and local problems. It forms another link to my community.

"Rosh Hashonah this year means so much to the Jewish people. Besides the prayer for victory and peace it appears that we are now very much closer to the realization of our perennial wish of 'Lashono Habaah Berusholayim.'

"A year ago I commented on the Jewish chaplain situation in the army. I am happy to say that there have been changes for the better, and that the Jewish chaplain has now found his place.

"This year I attended services on the post. The chapel was crowded, the Holy Day Services were quite inspiring even though abridged. Our able Chaplain

Grossman was assisted by a young cantor who is temporarily devoting his full time to Uncle Sam. The usual color and buoyancy which pervades the atmosphere of a civilian congregation was completely lacking.

"The solemnity of the day could be sensed in the stillness of the atmosphere. There was 'no chatting with neighbors; each one's attention was fixed on the altar or on the small prayer book resting in the worshiper's hands. The gravity of the occasion was visible in the face of every man or woman of this uniformed congregation. For these men and women not only prayed for victory but realized that theirs was also the task of achieving it. They could not purchase victory with bonds alone; their immediate future might demand flesh, blood, or even life. That is how they prayed at Fort Jackson on the evening and the morning of the next day.

"Everyone realized that victory entails sacrifice, but that this privilege should not be limited to the men in uniform. If there are any benefits to be derived from a victorious peace they will be shared by all, and surely all should contribute towards their attainment. I am certain many at home feel that way.

"My little son David now attends your Hebrew School and he tells me he enjoys it immensely and learns a lot. He even repeats a few Hebrew words to me in my telephone conversations with him. My wife also enjoyed the services at the Center.

"So thank you again for your thoughtfulness, and may God grant you and 'Kol Yisrael' a new year of greater happiness."

I am grateful to all the correspondents. I am certain that my readers share with me my keen interest in all that is said by the men who are doing so much to bring victory to our cause, and, we hope, a just and lasting peace for all the world.

Israel H. Peruthal

Send the "Review" to a man in service you know. He will enjoy reading it and appreciate your thoughtfulness.

THE DRAMA OF THE CONFERENCE

[Continued from page 10]

be unlimited immigration to Palestine. But he made no reference to the Jewish Commonwealth, to the Jewish control of immigration, to any idea in dispute. He contented himself with saying that "Israel must be restored to nationhood."

VII.

At this halting moment between night and day, between peace and war; with the Zionists greatly troubled, with the non-Zionists uncertain as to where this confusion would lead, the man destined to play the part of *deus ex machina* revealed himself in the person of Abba Hillel Silver, who was the next speaker — not representing the Zionists, but the American Jewish Congress. Dr. Silver rose from his seat in the second row on the platform. He moved somewhat clumsily and with uncertain steps in the direction of the speaker's desk. He leaned his hands on the desk and braced his shoulders. Then his voice rang out. He was the debater, the pleader, the rebuker. He was interested in making a case and winning it, and used all the arts of the advocate who wanted to win a verdict. He sought the right word to describe what he wanted to say. He was not evasive. He was not tactful. He was not considerate. He was in dead earnest and wanted his truth to be known. He gave a moving, penetrating analysis of the present conditions of Jewish life.

He said: "The Jewish people are in danger of coming out of this war the most ravaged of peoples and the least healed and restored. The last war granted the Jews of Europe not only the rights of citizenship, but even minority rights. But it brought in its wake the most thoroughgoing, brutal and annihilationist anti-Semitism our people has ever experienced."

He disdained the reference to the idea of a Jewish Commonwealth as an ideology. He asked: "Is the natural, normal instinct of a homeless people to find a home for itself after centuries of homelessness and to lead a normal, natural existence, an ideology? Is it an ideology for an Englishman to want an England, or for a Frenchman to want a France? Is it an ideology for the people of Israel to want the land of Israel? We are not

insisting on ideologies. We are insisting on the faithful fulfillment of obligations internationally assumed towards our people and on the honoring of covenants made with us. If we surrender our natural and historic claim to Palestine and rely solely on the refugee philanthropic appeal, we shall lose our case as well as do violence to the historic hopes of our people. To ask, therefore, the Jewish people to abdicate the political positions which after centuries it finally acquired in Palestine, or by remaining silent about them, to suggest to the world that we have abandoned them, on the vain assumption that this would lead to the opening of the doors of Palestine to large-scale Jewish immigration, is utterly fantastic."

Any summary would be inadequate to convey the totality of the impression made by Dr. Silver. His address was interrupted many times by fervent applause, by resounding acclaim. It created an electrical excitement that seemed to bind every listener to every syllable uttered by the speaker. It was the climax of a great moment. It was the most significant event in the Conference. It served to bring back the Zionists to the mood of unswerving loyalty to their cause. It banished all thought of compromise and retreat. It strengthened their conviction that they could carry the whole Jewish people with them on the wings of their faith and enthusiasm in the great struggle in which they are now immersed.

GERMANY'S TRAGIC JEW

[Continued from page 10]

the Hate Song as one of the least significant of his creations; that it had gained its tremendous popularity against his will; the others, like Thomas Mann, or the Socialist *arbeiter-dichter*, had written lines no less spiteful than his own; that he was anything but a politician, and that he had publicly apologized for his wretched poem in a letter to a Berlin paper in 1919. It was in vain — his renown was to burn him for the rest of his life like the shirt of Nessus, to use Stefan Zweig's words. This kind, highly educated, immensely gifted poet was a marked

VIII.

Having riveted the attention of the Conference, of the visitors, of the lobbies on the presentation of the Zionist position, the demands of the Zionists as the representatives of the majority in Jewish life, having aroused their spirits and their enthusiasm and their determination, and having given one of the clearest expositions of Zionism, uncomplicated by ideology, heard in many a year in the American Jewish Community, the question of Palestine passed over into the hands of a committee, of which Dr. Silver had been selected as Chairman. There, Dr. Silver adopted the reverse of the platform method he had used the night before. He was silent. He did not join in the debate. He was the moderator, directing the discussion of forty-six speakers, keeping "the table" clear for the resolutions, adding nothing to his presentation in the plenum. All the Zionist speakers, as if at last released from their inhibitions, forgot whatever idea they may have had of conciliation and compromise, of adjustment and avoidance, and stoutly held to the line laid down. The vote in committee was sixty to two. The vote in the plenum recorded only four against and about twenty not voting.

Thus, the drama was played and came to its unexpected end. If I may venture to say, the Hero (as described) gave a great performance. The Adversary contented himself with a small part, well-mannered, urbane, but ineffectual. And the Conference proceeded to the other matters on its agenda. All else was in the nature of an anti-climax, as happens very often in the last act of a great drama.

man; many of his colleagues refused to greet him; an unpleasant silence fell when he entered a meeting, and friends of mine rebuked me for having contact with that "monster," although, actually, he was only a victim of the hysteria of hate that befell all belligerent nations.

Like Walther Rathenau and other super-assimilated German Jews, Lissauer profoundly admired the Prussians, and he remained a typical Prussian even though he spent the last fifteen years of his life in Vienna, where he had gone with his

[Continued on next page]

second wife, a kind-hearted Gentile woman who survived him and who, in 1938, when the Nazis invaded Austria, courageously aided many of her late husband's Jewish colleagues. (Lissauer's first wife, a Jewess, died in a lunatic asylum.) But the German nationalists rejected his enthusiastic odes (written in a forceful style reminiscent of Walt Whitman) on such German composers as Bach, Beethoven, or Bruckner, and his expressionist dramas on Martin Luther, Thomas Muenzer, and General York — subjects only an "Aryan" should be allowed to deal with. Yet when Lissauer turned to Jewish topics, such as the story of Moses (in his remarkable drama, "Der Weg des Gewaltigen") or that of "The Wife of Jephthah," the Jewish press, angered by Lissauer's former alliance with German nationalism, ridiculed him, declaring that

he had made his Biblical heroes talk like Nordic heathen gods and barbarians — a reproach not entirely justified.

What *was* this man, then, that I saw die in the Jewish hospital of Vienna a few months before Hitler was to occupy Austria? An opportunist, a mere mountebank, an "Aher" of German Jewry? I do not believe so. I think he was sincere in his desire, like that of the late philosopher Hermann Cohen, for a complete amalgamation of Judaism and Germanism, without, however, abandonment of the Mosaic faith. When Hitler came to power in Germany, Lissauer's dreams seemed destroyed forever, and in his last years he wrote a cycle of tragic confessional psalms no less moving than the longing stanzas Heinrich Heine had written on his *matratzengruft* in Paris eighty years before.

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Mincha services at 5:00.

Daily Services

MORNING services at 7:00 and 8:00.

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Congratulations

HEARTIEST congratulations and best wishes are extended to Mr. and Mrs. Nathan L. Goldstein of the Granada Hotel, upon the birth of a son to their children, Major and Mrs. Sidney Becker of Washington, D. C.

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BEN BERNIE'S LAST CURTAIN

[Continued from page 15]

tering manner that later made him famous on the radio.

"He returned to New York, met Phil Baker, an old friend, who then lived on Seventy-second Street. Phil insisted he was a concertina expert, and was so persuasive that the team of Bernie and Baker was formed. (Ben had changed his surname again to the one that stuck the rest of his life.)

"Then came the war. Baker joined the Navy, and Bernie, as he used to explain it, served the Intelligence Division by watching German acrobats on the Orpheum circuit, where he had a single act. After the war, when the jazz-band craze was at its height, Bernie formed an orchestra. It was chosen for the opening of the Hotel Roosevelt in 1922.

"Bernie's band created a new style of informality, with Bernie making wry remarks to the radio audience — it was one of the first bands to go on the air — and the dancers. Crowds filled the Roosevelt Grill, where he was, and his success was assured. A tour of European cafes fol-

lowed, but when he returned to this country Bernie was 'broke.'

"He scraped enough money together to get to Hollywood, where he found work for his orchestra at the Montmartre Cafe. Maurice Chevalier came in one day with a party while engaged in organizing a two-week vaudeville show for a run on the Coast. He gave Bernie a place as a featured entertainer.

"This venture was sensationally successful. Ben and 'all the lads,' as he called his orchestra, received an offer from College Inn in Chicago. With this went a sponsored program on the air. He had been almost continually on the air since that time, and before his last illness made frequent appearances at Army camps."

Bernie and his first wife, Mrs. Rose H. Anzelevitz, were divorced in September, 1935, after being married twenty years.

The next November Bernie married Miss Dorothy Wesley of Miami Beach, Fla., who was at his bedside when he died.

A son by his first wife, Pvt. Jason Bernie, survives him.

Amsterdam "Juden Rein"

ANNOUNCING that the last of Amsterdam's 65,000 Jews had been deported by the Nazis on September 29, Premier Peter Gerbrandy, of the Dutch Government-in-Exile, made a moving speech in which he said: "Although there are hardly any Jews left on Dutch soil, the Jewish element of our people will resume one day its place in the Netherlands."

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